All-Hazards Communications Technician (COMT)

Class Description

V1.1
042310

PURPOSE

Through the Office of Emergency Communications, the *All-Hazards Communications Technician* (COMT) Class has been developed to provide DHS approved National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant All-Hazards Communications Technician (COMT) instruction to ensure that every state/territory has trained personnel capable of providing on-scene emergency communications during a multi-jurisdictional response.

CLASS OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of the class, the student will be able to:

> • Identify the functions of the Communications Unit and the duties and responsibilities of the COMT.
> • Arrive at an all-hazards incident properly equipped, gather information to assess the assignment, and begin initial planning activities of a COMT.
> • Identify basic components and theories behind the successful establishment and operation of the technical communications resources supporting an incident. During the class, emphasis is placed on radio, telephone, data networks, and satellite technologies.
> • Understand incident scene safety issues and mitigation strategies.
> • Understand the basics of installation and maintenance of incident communications systems.
> • Maintain accountability of assigned communications equipment.
> • Understand resources available to enhance the student's skills upon completion of the class.
> • Understand the Position Task Book and the process for completing it.

CLASS STRUCTURE

Day 1 Unit 1: Introduction
　　　　Unit 2: The COMT
　　　　Unit 3: Interoperable Communications
　　　　Unit 4: Radio Technology
Day 2 Radio Exercise
　　　　Unit 5: Incident Communications Systems
　　　　Exercise
　　　　Unit 6: Gateways Technology
　　　　Exercise
　　　　Unit 7: Telephone Technology
Day 3 Telephone Exercise
　　　　Unit 8: Computer Technology
　　　　Computer Exercise
　　　　Unit 9: Satellite Technology
　　　　Exercise
Day 4 Unit 10: Safety Awareness
　　　　Unit 11: Mobilization
　　　　Unit 12: Resource Awareness
　　　　Exercise

Unit 13: Demobilization
Unit 14: Resources and Review
Day 5 Final Exercise

CLASS TIME REQUIREMENTS

It is a five (5) day class for a total of 40 hours. The class is presented with facilitated lecture and student exercises. There is adequate time built in to the class to facilitate interactive discussions and exercises. Instructors will work through the discussions and exercises to explain processes used to reach communication interoperability and be able to incorporate any additional communication solutions the students may develop during the class. The first day's class will begin at 0830 hours local time, *unless other agreements have been reached.*

CLASSROOM REQUIREMENTS – HOST RESPONSIBILITIES

The classroom should have adequate seating and working space for the number of students registered for the class. Additional space, preferably break-out rooms, is needed for the exercises. There will be four (4) break-out stations, with a maximum of two break-out stations per room. Additional break-out space will be needed outside in a lawn or parking lot area where communications equipment can be set up. Break-out session rooms or space will include at least two tables where equipment can be set. Preferably both break-out spaces will have functional telephone jacks (these will be used in the hands-on exercises – no telephone is necessary).

Logistical support items to be supplied by the Host Agency include:
- a data projector;
- screen;
- computer cable power strip and adequate power *per student table*;
- painters tape;
- adjustable lighting to allow better viewing of the projector screen;
- An easel with markers or a white board with markers and an eraser;
- two portable repeaters with programmed frequencies;
- one portable gateway with local gateway Subject Matter Expert or COML/COMT assigned to the gateway equipment *who is not a class student;*
- a local, regional, or State radio cache[1];
- *(Recommended, not Required)* Satellite communications equipment with local Subject Matter Expert or COML/COMT assigned to the satellite equipment *who is not a class student*;
- *(Recommended, not Required)* One Mobile Communications Vehicle with a local Subject Matter Expert or COML/COMT assigned to the unit *who is not a class student*.

Additionally, the Host Agency will need to provide the following information to the OEC

---

[1] A radio cache is defined as an inventory of 5 or more rapidly-deployable portable radios in the same band with transportable case(s), preferably programmed to be used with the portable repeater supplied to the class. The cache should include rechargeable radio batteries with chargers and/or clamshells with disposable batteries for each of the radios in the cache. Radios must contain both direct mode channels and conventional repeated pairs to be utilized with the supplied portable repeater. The cache should also include 5 or more radio documentation sheets to include the list of programmed channels, frequencies, channel numbers, and zones, as well as at least 5 user manuals or "cheat sheets" to instruct users on basic cache use. The cache should also include one cache inventory sheet containing tracking information for all radios and accessories in the cache.

Instructors *at least one week prior to the class:*
- Copies of local Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs);
- Details (model/type) of communications equipment that will be supplied;
- CASM password or local/State CASM administrator;
- List of registered students with agency and job title;
- Electronic copies of the Registration Form for each student (the Registration Form will be supplied to the Host).

The OEC Class Coordinator will provide a checklist to the Host Agency to facilitate the delivery of required items. The electronic presentation is provided to each student on a CD in Adobe Portable Document Format. Class size is limited to 15 students.

PRE-COURSE WORK

Each student will receive Study Materials in electronic format. Students will be tested during class time on materials provided in the Study Materials. Students are responsible for the information in the Study Materials.

COURSE MATERIALS

OEC will provide the student workbook and information CD.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS – STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students will need to bring:
- pencils/pens;
- notepaper;
- *Required:* Portable radio from the student's home agency;
- *Required:* List of communications equipment and frequencies from the student's home area;
- *Recommended:* Field-programmable portable radio, programming cable, and clamshell with batteries or battery charger/spare batteries (if available);
- *Recommended:* Laptop computer with System Administrator rights enabled, if possible.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

The COMT class is targeted for all local, regional, state and federal cross disciplinary emergency response professionals and coordination/support personnel with a communications background. Individuals who are assigned responsibility for a Strategic Technology Reserve (radio cache, mobile communications vehicle, or other deployable communications assets) are encouraged to attend. *This class is targeted to students who have technical aptitude, but not necessarily strong technical experience.* Students should leave the class with a strong foundational knowledge of incident communications processes and systems, and some basic skills. Field experience in preparation to deploy as a single resource will be gained by the student after returning to his/her home agency during the Position Task Book process. The Position Task Book process will be explained during the class. See CLASS OBJECTIVES.

STUDENT PREREQUISITES

Listed below are the All-Hazards COMT prerequisites candidates must possess to attend the class:

- A public safety communications background with exposure to field operations.

- Fundamental public safety communications technology awareness.

- Basic knowledge of local communications and communications system, frequencies and spectrum, technologies, local topography, system site locations including knowledge of local, regional, and state communication plans, and communications and resource contacts.

- Completion of the following training courses:

  o ICS-100
  o ICS-200
  o IS-700
  o IS-800
  o *ICS-300 is recommended for students, but **not required**.*

- A written recommendation from the student's supervisor attesting that the student possesses the knowledge listed above.

Students will need to review the Study Materials prior to attending the class. The student's home agency should consider providing the student time to prepare to attend the class.